

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 02417 240554Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AS-01 SSO-00 L-03 EB-07 COME-00

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00 OPIC-06 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3451

INFO GOVERNOR/AMERICAN SAMOA

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 2417

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV, WS

SUBJECT: WESTERN SAMOAN INSURANCE OPERATIONS IN AMERICAN SAMOA

1. ON JUNE 24 THE PRIME MINISTER OF WESTERN SAMOA
TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR SELDEN TO REQUEST URGENTLY HIS
ASSISTANCE IN EXPEDITING ACTION NEEDED TO ENABLE THE
ENTRY OF WESTERN SAMOA NATIONAL PACIFIC INSURANCE COMPANY
(NPI), A FULLY OWNED GOVERNMENT COMPANY, INTO AMERICAN
SAMOA.

2. ACCORDING TO PM EFI THE CASE IS AS FOLLOWS:

ALL DOCUMENTAION FOR ENTRY OF NPI INTO
PAGO COMPLETED EXCEPT THAT THERE IS PROBLEM WITH AMERICAN
SAMOA GOVERNMENT ISSUING NPI WITH LICENCE TO CARRY ON
BUSINESS AS INSURANCE COMPANY IN AMERICAN SAMOA. THIS
DIFFICULTY ARISES BY VIRTUE OF AN OBSCURE PROVISION IN
AMERICAN SAMOA LAW. DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN ONGOING WITH
AMERICAN SMOA AUTHORITIES ABOUT ISSUE OF SUCH LICENCE BUT
EFI'S UNDERSTANDING IS THAT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR
GOVERNOR HIMSELF TO APPROVE ISSUE OF FULL LICENCE (WITH
APPROPRIATE ADVICE FROM PAGO ATTORNEY GENERAL) OR (WHAT
WILL MORE LIKELY BRING IMMEDIATE ACTION) ISSUE OF TEMPORARY
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PAGE 02 WELLIN 02417 240554Z

LICENCE UNTIL SAID OBSCURE PROVISION OF LAW IS REPEALED.
UNDERSTANDING IS THAT AMERICAN SMOA AUTHORITIES WILL BE
PREPARED TO PROMOTE BILL TO REPEAL THIS PROVISION IN
FORTHCOMING SESSION OF LEGISLATURE.

3. MATTER IS OF CONSIDERABLE URGENCY NOW BECAUSE NPI
HAS ENTERED INTO DEAL TO TAKE OVER INSURANCE BUSINESS OF

HARTFORD IN PAGO. THERE IS TIGHT TIME LIMIT FOR HARTFORD TO WITHDRAW FROM PAGO. IN FACT IT HAS ALREADY FILED ITS PAPERS TO WITHDRAW INSURANCE COMPANY FROM PAGO.

4. PRIME MINISTER WHILE IN LOS ANGELES SPOKE WITH GOVERNOR DESIGNATE REX LEE AND UNDERSTANDING IS THAT GOVERNOR LEE WILL BE PREPARED TO DO ALL HE CAN TO FACILITATE ENTRY OF NPI INTO PAGO.

5. IN VIEW OF PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL CALL TO AMBASSADOR, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT LOOKING INTO THIS MATTER URGENTLY TO DETERMINE IF SUCH A TAKEOVER BY NPI OF HARTFORD IN PAGO AND TO SET UP OPERATIONS THERE IS POSSIBLE.
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